

This I believe Patchwork 3

When my teacher handed me the assignment sheet, two words caught my eye, “your belief”. My beliefs? I went down the list in my mind. Love? Perseverance? Nope, too cliché. Dreams? Passion? Common. Then it occurred to me that I missed out my most fervent belief. I believe that I should reflect on, and correct, my own shortcomings and flaws before criticising others for having the same flaws. The principle behind my belief? I realise that I often accuse people of having a certain flaw only to have them throw it back at me, more often than not coupled with another one of my flaws.

In Matthew 7:3 of the bible, it says, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?” When I read this verse, the truth of it struck me. As a human being, I often consider myself as better than someone else. Because of this, it is not infrequent that I discount my own mistakes while magnifying others’.

Many times, I often shoot straight out and denounce others for certain faults that they have. However, if I sit down and carefully examine myself, it becomes apparent when I too, have the same flaws.

An incident that took place not too long ago in my own home reminded me of this belief. It started over something small, like my sister using my brother’s stationery without first seeking his permission. I remember being distracted from my homework over shouting that occurred downstairs. As the elder sister, it was my responsibility to be the peacemaker. As such, I yelled at them both to tone it down and chided them for fighting over such a minor incident. Then my brother piped up, “Well, you do that too!” Of course, at that point, I rebuked him for talking back. However, in the comfort of my own room, writing this essay, it struck me that yes, I am indeed a person who overreacts to things, I also have a short temper. Had I taken that into consideration that day, I would not have been so quick to scold my siblings for a mistake I myself would have made.

“You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view--until you climb inside of his skin and walk around in it.” That is what Atticus said in the classic, To kill a mockingbird. Sometimes, all it takes is for you to step into that person’s shoes, see things from his perspective and think about how you would do things if you were him.

The next time you feel an insult building up inside you, waiting to burst out, do a check of your own character first and if you find that you too would have reacted in the same way, perhaps then you would not be so quick to judge another person's actions. You might have done the same if you were him.

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